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## **Governor Richardson, Environment Department Aid Clovis with Redevelopment of “Skyscraper of the Plains”**

(Santa Fe, NM) – Governor Bill Richardson and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) have agreed to provide the City of Clovis with funding to help speed the redevelopment of the historic Hotel Clovis. This nine-story Clovis landmark was opened in 1931. It was once the tallest building between Albuquerque and Dallas.

Governor Richardson and NMED have made \$5,000 worth of Targeted Brownfields Assessment services available to Clovis to perform a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) at the hotel. This work will help the city determine the extent of existing environmental hazards at the site, and will help interested purchasers make redevelopment decisions. The hotel is known to contain asbestos and lead-based paint, but the ESA will determine if other contaminants of concern exist in the building and provide recommendations for clean up.

“The uncertain future of Cannon Air Force Base has made economic development opportunities in Clovis even more important,” said Governor Richardson. “This funding will help new economic life spring from this neglected site.”

In the past, the Hotel Clovis played host to nationally known entertainers including Louis Armstrong, Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, and Hank Williams. For many years, it was the cultural and social center of Clovis.

“I am hopeful that with the state’s help, vibrant life can return to the Hotel Clovis,” said Governor Richardson.

Clovis may use the ESA to enter the historic hotel into NMED’s Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP). The VRP promotes the cleanup of contaminated properties, and encourages the productive redevelopment of these sites by providing a non-punitive remediation process. Participants that complete the VRP program successfully receive site closure documentation from the NMED, including a Certificate of Completion and a Covenant not to Sue. These documents promote redevelopment by shielding new property owners, operators and lending intuitions from any past environmental liability.

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“The Voluntary Remediation Program is a ‘win-win’ for all involved,” said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. “By working together we can clean up sites and return them to productive use for the state’s economy and citizens. This is a perfect example of how economic development and environmental protection can go hand in hand.”

The Hotel Clovis is located one block from the Clovis railroad depot. The hotel is valued for its art deco architectural style and is listed on State and National Historic registers. The nearly 60,000 square-foot hotel has 114 rooms and suites. After falling into disrepair, the hotel closed in 1983. The City of Clovis acquired the building through foreclosure approximately two years ago.

Brownfields assessment services provided by NMED are made possible through a federal brownfields grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6 Office in Dallas.

For more information contact Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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